

A LAC OF RUPEES,

Or The Lucky Man.

BY W. H. WHITE.

It was a bright frosty afternoon in November. Cornelius Crandal, widower, and Tamar Ann Teller, spinster, met in the main street of Centerville, a flourishing little town, the locality of which may be ascertained by searching, carefully, the newest map of a neighboring state.

Mr. Crandal was a retired merchant. Having made a handsome fortune in trade, he had sold out—store, stock, fixtures, good will, etc.—and, settled down with the dignified ease which a retired merchant with a substantial bank account is entitled to enjoy. He was about fifty, rather good-looking, with a solid, substantial figure, fond of money, somewhat dull, intellectually; good-tempered and given to gossip. He had been a widower about ten years.

Miss Teller was a slender, active, comely little woman of about thirty-five. She did a flourishing business in the line of dress-making, being, in fact, the chief mantua-maker in Centerville.

"Good-morning, Tamar Ann. What's the news?"

"Why, Borneel, haven't you heard?"

"No. What is it?"

"Martin Weldon has got back from Calcutta in the East India. I saw him this morning, looking as yellow as a last year's lemon, and Martin's only about forty, you know."

"Did he make any money out in the Indies?"

"Yes. He's as rich as Kreesus, whatever that is; a real nabob, you know; and he has brought home with him a lac of gold rupees."

"What's a lac?" queried the retired merchant.

"A lac's what the Hindoo heathen call a hundred thousand."

"And how much is a gold rupee?" the widower wanted to know.

"A rupee is worth about seven dollars of our money. I found out about it this morning in Webster's big dictionary," responded Tamar Ann, glibly.

"My patience—sakes alive!" exclaimed Cornelius, greatly interested; "and how much is that altogether?"

"Aren't you smart! Any school-boy could tell you that without stopping to figure it out; and you an old storekeeper, too! If a rupee is worth seven dollars, a lac of 'em amounts to seven hundred thousand, of course," replied Tamar Ann, somewhat scornfully.

"You don't say so?"

"But I do; and so does Charles Travers. Charles is a sort of relation to Martin Weldon, you know, and so am I, come to think of it."

"So he is, so are you! Goodness gracious! Seven hundred thousand—why that's most a million!" rejoined Crandal.

"Yes, indeed. Good-by, Corneel; I can't stand here talking all day," replied the lively spinster, leaving the tired merchant to cogitate over the immensity of the treasure brought home by the nabob.

Martin Weldon, the nabob aforesaid, was a tall, muscular, good-looking gentleman of about forty, with a complexion by no means of the color which Tamar Ann had asserted it to be. A set of strong, white teeth, a pleasant smile and a twinkling eye, denoted that he possessed a sound constitution, good digestion, and a merry disposition.

Mr. Cornelius Crandal's first business was to invite Mr. Weldon to his house; his next move was to throw the rich East Indian into the society of his ward, Nellie Kingsbury, a shapely, bright-eyed damsel, who was as full of sweet as a red-ripe Cuba orange.

Mr. Crandal's object was, of course, to catch the nabob, using Nellie as a bait; at which, he thought, the golden gudgeon would surely bite.

Nellie, however, who had placed her affections in the keeping of Charles Travers, was by no means inclined to join in this rupee-catching arrangement.

Charles Travers was the proprietor of the "Centerville Stationery Emporium, Music Depository and Circulating Library," to which place the ladies were in the habit of resorting for note paper, sheet music, new novels and gossip.

Travers was well-to-do, wore city-cut garments, and was called, by the almost unanimous voice of the feminine portion of the population, "The handsomest man in Centerville."

Charles and Nellie were engaged, and the course of their true love was running smoothly toward the nuptial goal, when the advent of this modern Ceresus threatened to interrupt its piodicity.

From that day Mr. Crandal set his face severely against any further courting between Charles and Nellie. Not that the widower liked the young man less, but he loved the nabob's rupees more; and therefore, in the expressive language of Miss Teller, "Charles Travers' nose was out of joint with Corneel Crandal."

One day Mr. Crandal and Mr. Weldon were together in Mr. Crandal's best parlor. The conversation soon turned upon Nellie and matrimony.

"Mr. Weldon, what do you think of my niece, Nellie?" said the widower, blandly.

"I think she is one of the sweetest, prettiest and best girls in the country," was the prompt and hearty reply.

"Well, she's a nice gal, that's a fact," said the pleased uncle, "and I only wish that the right sort of a man, one that I could put my hand on easy, would make up to her," putting his hand on the nabob's arm, and looking hard in his face.

"Mr. Crandal, I think I could help you to a good husband for your charming niece," said Mr. Weldon, after a short pause.

"Do you, indeed?"

"Yes, provided the young lady would be willing."

"Oh, she'll be willing; or, if not, we can soon bring her round—y-u and I," exclaimed the widower, full of the idea

that the rich man and his rupees were soon to be secured.

"How could we do that?" inquired Weldon.

"Oh, by impressing upon her mind the splendid position she would hold as a millionaire's wife," replied Crandal.

"What woman could resist a lac of gold rupees?" continued the retired merchant, with a burst of enthusiasm.

"It is a great temptation, I admit, and with love for the man, as well as admiration of his money, such a match would be a happy one, indeed."

"That is so, Mr. Weldon. Nellie will love you dearly when she knows you better. How could she help it?"

"Love me, Mr. Crandal! It is not of myself that I have been speaking, but of Charles Travers."

"Travers!" exclaimed Cornelius. "Charles Travers? Why, he's not rich, he's well-to-do; but he isn't the man I mean. There is no lac of rupees in his money box."

"How? why? What do you mean, Martin Weldon, eh?" was the response of the amazed widower.

"I mean that Travers is now the owner of one half the rupees that belonged to me when I reached Centerville."

"What! worth half a lac of gold rupees?" exclaimed Cornelius, who was down in imagination, upon his knees worshipping the representative of so many golden images.

"But is that true about Charles Travers?" he continued, as he recollected what Martin Weldon had said concerning the division of his rupees with that young man.

"Yes," responded Weldon, "Charles owns half of all the India riches I ever possessed."

This answer caused Cornelius to remove, mentally, a knee from the floor, so that he now remained upon one only before his auriferous idol.

"Well, you've got the other half?"

"No, that I made over to Tamar Ann Teller. She's a distant relative of mine, as well as of Travers, you know."

"But what did you do it for? What made you throw away your rupees?"

"Oh, there's a secret concerning the matter that can't be divulged at present. Family affairs, you know, and so forth. Suffice it to say that Charles Travers and Tamar Ann Teller have now, between them, every rupee that I brought home with me."

"And haven't you got any left?"

"Not a rupee, as I'm a sinner."

Mr. Crandal arose immediately from his mental marrow-bones and stood erect. His golden image had turned to common clay and was no longer worth worshipping.

"Not a rupee, eh?" he exclaimed.

"And Charles Travers and Tamar Ann own 'em all?"

"Yes."

"Well, I am beat," replied Cornelius. "Of course," he continued, "you don't want to marry Nellie now, you don't?—now that you're poor, and besides, you are so much older than she is."

"You seem to forget, sir, that it was you, not I, that wanted Nellie Kingsbury to become Mrs. Weldon. I never proposed such a thing. Mr. Travers is the man I nominated as the best person for Nellie to marry."

"Oh, yes; I believe you did," replied Cornelius, bewildered and baffled, "but I'm so confused I hardly know what I am talking about. You say that Tamar Ann Teller has got half of them rupees?"

"Yes, certainly."

"Well, I always thought that she was a nice gal," replied Crandal.

"By gracious!" he continued, striking his hands together with emphasis. "I'll do it! Why not?"

"Do what?" inquired Weldon.

"Eh? Oh, never mind," said Crandal. "Tamar Ann Teller and a lac of rupees! Why, she needn't remain single another month, with all that money."

"Of course not. I would ask her myself if I was not already engaged to my old sweet-heart, Widow Brown."

"Yes, Tamar Ann is a nice gal, and would make any man a good wife—that is any middle-aged man. Yes, yes, why not—why not?" murmured Cornelius, more, however, in response to his own thoughts than in reply to Weldon.

Martin gazed at Cornelius for a moment, with a quizzical expression on his sunburnt countenance, and then asked: "After what I've told you, Mr. Crandal, will you consent to the marriage of your niece with Travers?"

"Oh, yes, of course; with all my heart. I always did like Charles; but when you came with your gold rupees, it made him appear like a poor man; and a poor man is no match for N-l-l-i-e, you know. Yes, they may marry as soon as they please. I've no objections now."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

The French Press takes the ground that Germany is the only power which can give the signal for disarmament. But, far from doing so, she piles up armament upon armament, without shrinking from the heaviest additions to her taxes, and even laying an extra duty on beer. If a general disarmament were proposed, France would be compelled to tell Germany, "Apres vous: do you begin?"

WASHINGTON, D. C., Jan. 16, 1886.

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Senator Edmunds, when in the Vermont Legislature, showed the same care for the details of legislation that he does in Washington. Dr. Beecher, of Hinesburg, tells a story illustrating his friend's watchfulness. Mr. Edmunds spoke to him of a little bill, asking the Doctor to pass it through his committee in the Senate. Somehow the Doctor missed it, and spoke to the Chittenden County member about it. "That bill," returned Mr. Edmunds, "has passed. I want you to understand that I do not follow, so as to know its position each night."

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PERSONAL.

Professor John Fiske is lecturing in Buffalo.

Mr. Simon Cameron was 81 years old last Tuesday.

Senator Edmunds is a member of the Episcopal Church.

Mr. Nathan Allen is with Comte De Lesseps in Washington.

Mr. Sala thinks that the American telegraph money order is a new wonder of the world.

Senator Hoar is in New York serving on a Sub-Committee of Investigation into Election Abuses.

Bishop Paddock will visit St. Paul's Church, Brookline, and administer the rite of confirmation.

M. Victor Cherbuliez, the clever French novelist, is just getting over an attack of small-pox.

Lord Dufferin is studying the Russian language and can speak it reasonably well. He gives an hour each day to the work.

Mr. Cutler, of the Nova Scotia Legislature, has been a member of that body for forty-two years and is now ninety-six years of age.

Cetywayo is reported to be anxious to see England, and it is thought that he will be permitted to visit that country in the summer.

Mr. E. B. Washburne has gone to the Hot Springs of Arkansas with a party of friends to spend a month or two. It is said that he will probably meet General Grant before his return.

Mr. Arthur Sullivan, who recently visited the Princess Louise, is quoted in the Boston Traveller as saying that the Princess asked him to contradict the report that she did not wish to return to Canada. She loves it and came back with enthusiasm.

Sardou, the dramatist, is described as a good talker; the only fault to be found with him is that he is a little too quick, nervous and effervescent, and when especially interested in conversation flies about the room like one possessed, and scintillating with wit.

Mr. Longfellow has received a gift of a beautiful book containing the names of 800 children who presented him last year the chair made of the Cambridge chestnut. The inside of the cover has a panel made of the chestnut and carved in illustration of "The Village Blacksmith's" forge.

Ex-Governor Alcorn is said to be, with one exception, "the most extensive and probably the most successful cotton-planter in Mississippi." It was likewise stated by the Jackson Clarion that Time has not written a wrinkle on his brow since his retirement from politics.

The Rev. William M. Baker, the author of "His Majesty, Myself," is the pastor of a small Presbyterian congregation in Boston, and is a kindly man much liked in that pleasant city. He is a slender, middle-aged gentleman of Virginian birth. He preached in Louisiana and Texas during the war.

Ex-Secretary McCulloch intends to give up his New York house in May, and to return with his family to their home near Washington. Mr. McCulloch is quoted as saying that he prefers Washington to any other city; and his household gods are to be set up there permanently, much to the regret of his many friends in this city.

M. Meissonier, who owns to sixty-seven years of existence, has a handsome house full of beautiful artistic objects, and though he has earned more money than any other painter in France, is so fond of luxury that he is now not worth more than \$200,000. He receives from \$3,000 to \$5,000 for a portrait. His cuisine is perfect, his wine-cellar "magnificent." He paints very slowly, and utterly refuses to be hurried when executing commissions.

Mr. Alvan Clark, the founder of the famous Cambridge Telescope Works, was seventy-six years old on the 8th inst. He is a thoroughly stalwart man in spite of his many years, his gray hair being the only sign of old age about him. Mr. Clark traces his ancestry back to the Mayflower. He is now waiting for the arrival of material from Paris in order to proceed with the telescope which he is making for the Russian Government.

Isaac W. Hayne, of South Carolina, died Sunday in his seventy-first year. He was the grandson of Colonel Isaac Hayne, who was hanged by the British during their occupation of Charleston in the Revolutionary war, and he was a cousin of the distinguished Robert Y. Hayne, who originated the nullification resolutions of South Carolina, the suggestion of which brought on the famous debate in the Senate between him and Webster. Mr. Hayne for twenty years preceding the reconstruction of South Carolina was Attorney-General of the State.

Mr. B. G. Northrup, of Connecticut, was more than a year ago requested by Gen. Ki otaka Kuroda, Minister of the Interior Department of His Imperial Japanese Majesty, "to accept a small token of their appreciation of his services in behalf of Japanese students. That "small token of sincere thanks" arrived last week in the form of a beautiful breakfast, dinner and tea set of china of about two hundred pieces, with his initials on each. The exquisite decorations of each piece show why so long a time was needed to complete the set.

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